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Southwest Elementary School to Host 2016 Music in Our Schools

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Give a Note Foundation and Radio Disney to Celebrate Southwest Elementary School Music Program and Present \$2,500 Grant

RESTON, Va. (April 5, 2016) – March marked the 31st annual Music In Our Schools Month[®]. And over six weeks in March and April, six schools around the United States are hosting celebrations no student would want to miss.

On April 8, 2016, **Southwest Elementary School in Dexter, Missouri (Stoddard County)**, will be the fourth of six schools to be recognized for its music program and be presented a grant for \$2,500! **Radio Disney artist Before You Exit** will be joined by **Radio Disney on-air personality Nate** for the celebration. The Southwest Elementary Honor Choir will open the celebration.

“Winning the Music in Our Schools – Music Inspires Tour competition is probably the biggest thing that has ever happened in my community,” said Southwest Elementary music teacher James Eldreth. “Big events like this just do not happen without having to drive 2.5 hours to either St. Louis or Memphis. We anticipate most of our town attending on April 8th.”

“When I entered the competition, I never expected to win,” Mr. Eldreth continued. “I was using it as a chance to let my newly formed Honor Choir have the chance to do something special. When we did win, I was ecstatic! Getting any type of grant was not on my mind at all, but when I heard it was \$2,500 I was speechless! I definitely want to choose some things that will benefit all of the students.” Mr. Eldreth mentioned plans to provide the school library with books on music, noting the need to build reading skills among the students, as well as instruments and supplies for the music classroom.

Last October, Radio Disney on-air personality Brooke Taylor and Give a Note President and Board Chair Beth Slusher announced the partnership for the third annual Music In Our Schools Tour. Thanks to the generosity of Radio Disney, the **2016 Music In Our Schools – Music Inspires Tour** will have a greater reach than ever before.

The kickoff event took place March 19 at Disney’s Typhoon Lagoon Water Park at Walt Disney World Resorts where Radio Disney artists Carson Lueders and Before You Exit performed during Disney Performing Arts’ Festival Disney awards. Approximately 3,500 students were in attendance during that celebration where the six schools on the Music in Our Schools Tour were introduced.

Schools from all over the nation shared performances of songs that inspired their music students. And this past February, votes were cast to select one school in each of six regions around the United States to receive a grant from the Give a Note Foundation for their music program, a celebration concert with a Radio Disney artist, and a Radio Disney Music Awards (RDMA) "ARDY" Statuette, recognizing the schools as honorary award winners of the 2016 RDMA, music's biggest event for families.

These six schools will host the 2016 Music In Our Schools Tour (dates subject to change):

- March 17: Shady Hill Elementary School, Ocala, FL (Marion County); Music Teacher: Sondra A. W. Collins
- March 25: Spanish Fork Junior High School, Spanish Fork, UT (Utah County); Music Teacher: Angela Harman
- April 1: Stapleton Public Schools, Stapleton, NE (Logan County); Music Teacher: Daniel Gibbs
- April 8: Southwest Elementary School, Dexter, MO (Stoddard County); Music Teacher: James Eldreth
- April 15: George A. Jackson Elementary School, Jericho, NY (Nassau County); Music Teacher: Andrea Gonnella

- April 19: Maplewood Elementary School, Puyallup, WA (Pierce County); Music Teacher: Maggie Smith

Music In Our Schools Month® or “MIOSM®” is National Association for Music Education’s (NAfME) annual celebration during March which engages music educators, students, and communities from around the country in promoting the benefits of high quality music education programs in schools.

However, many underserved schools around the country do not receive the support they need to sustain their music programs. This need inspired the creation of *Give a Note Foundation*, which was established in 2011 by NAfME with a vision of giving every child the opportunity to participate in school music programs. Give a Note shines a spotlight on those areas of need, and the value of music education in the lives of all students, and the great work of the music teachers who reach those students.

Since 2011, Give a Note has given \$1.2 million in grants to schools for their music programs, reaching more than 40,000 students in 100 communities. Give a Note has reached 35 states and counting.

Follow the 2016 Music in Our Schools Tour on Instagram and Twitter by following the hashtags #MIOSStour, #MIOS2016, and #MusicInspires. See bit.ly/2016MIOSStour for details.

To learn more about *Give a Note Foundation*, visit www.giveanote.org.

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